

HOUSE RESOLUTION 58

By Gant

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Celia Yancey of Memphis.

WHEREAS, the members of this legislative body were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Celia Yancey, an exemplary woman and music artist; and

WHEREAS, born Celia Maxey in Brandon, Mississippi, Ms. Yancey was the daughter of Walter Loveless "Jack" Maxey and Catherine "Pat" Maxey and the granddaughter of Mary Webb Maxey; she earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Mississippi, where she was a member of the Delta Gamma Sorority, Alpha Psi Chapter; and

WHEREAS, following her graduation, Celia Yancey met William P. Yancey at a wedding; the two later joined in holy matrimony and settled in Somerville, Tennessee, where Ms. Yancey became a beloved educator. One of her many accomplishments was directing a countywide extravaganza celebrating the history of Fayette County in the 1973 Sesquicentennial Pageant; and

WHEREAS, serendipitously, Memphis producer Jim Dickinson heard Ms. Yancey sing, a talent she inherited from her late grandmother, and invited her to record with him, thus changing the trajectory of her life; after sharing space on an LP that featured talents such as James Brown, Steve Cropper, The Memphis Horns, The Nashville Strings, and The Muscle Shoals Horns, she grasped the opportunity to tour through Europe, adopting the stage name "Yancey"; and

WHEREAS, Celia Yancey headlined for Heart in Germany and opened a show for Billy Joel at the original Lafayette's in Overton Square in the late 1970s; and

WHEREAS, she continued her music career in Nashville and taught elementary school, putting to use her master's degree in education; she was awarded Teacher of the Year in Middle Tennessee, and in 2000, she returned to Memphis, where she continued to teach in the Memphis City School system until the time of her retirement; and

WHEREAS, following her retirement, Ms. Yancey joined the Horseshoe Recreational Club, which she served as the first woman president; she also spearheaded the renovation of the 110-year-old hunt and fish club into a retreat that served as a highlight of social events in Memphis and Eastern Arkansas and served as president of Cultivated Friends Garden Club, a member of Les Passees women's organization, and a member of the Watauga Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution; and

WHEREAS, she was also deeply devoted to her family, and she always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, she is survived by her son, Adam (Laura Carter, fiancée) Yancey; two grandchildren, Michael Drake Yancey and Caroline Newell Yancey; her sister, Dannie (Bob) Lorentz; four nieces, Kristen Lorentz (Damon) Young, Ashley (Buck) Burns, Cari (Spencer) South, and Lauren (Brian) Wilson; nine grand nieces and nephews, Genevieve, Ainsley, Ava, Hudson, Mary Caroline, Spencer, Ryleigh, Walter, and Parker Layne; and a host of devoted friends; and

WHEREAS, in addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her former husband; and

WHEREAS, Celia Yancey leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all her chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor the memory of Celia Yancey, reflecting fondly upon her impeccable character and her stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Ms. Yancey.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.